

Puget Sound Partnership Progress Report: July 2009

There is a lot of work going on supporting Action Agenda implementation. Highlighted below are some key activities keep you up to speed on our progress.

Performance management

Staff are moving forward on key elements of the Performance Management System that will be in place on Nov 1:

- Logical framework for developing intermediate outcomes with measurable targets and linking actions and investments to goals.
- Alignment of near-term actions with intermediate outcomes including performance measures and responsibility
- Web-based information and data system
- Adaptive management cycle
- 2009 report on ecosystem status and trends

The majority of the analytic work should be completed by the end of August with review and refinement in September and October.

State Grant and Loan Program review

As required by the Partnership statute, PSP staff has begun the process of working with state grant and loan agencies to prohibit projects in conflict with the Action Agenda from being funded, and to improve alignment of grants and loans with the Action Agenda.

Partnership staff (Jim Cahill and Linda Lyshall) met with representatives from the Recreation and Conservation Office, the Conservation Commission, the Department of Ecology, and the Department of Commerce on May 13, June 1 and June 19th. The goal of these meetings has been to gather information on each agency program and to try and develop a common approach. This work included developing an approach for incorporating the Partner designation into the project ranking process. PSP will now begin a series of meeting with individual agencies to review existing grant criteria.

Partner Designation Process

The Partnership is currently working with other agencies and organizations to determine who is a Puget Sound partner. It is envisioned that the specific criteria will be developed based upon the type of entity that is receiving a state grant or loan.

The Partnership has created a workgroup to help in the development of criteria for designating partners. The group presently includes representation from state agencies and counties. The group is being expanded to include representation from special purpose districts, cities and federal agencies. The first meeting was convened May 11, 2009 and future meetings are scheduled through the end of May 2009. The Partnership and the workgroup are developing a series of options for designating partners. These options will then be shared and evaluated by a broader group of stakeholders, as well as the ECB, at the July or September meeting. Final approval by the Leadership Council is expected to occur at their July or September meeting.

Oil Spill Oversight

David Dicks updated the Leadership Council and is talking with stakeholders, the Governor's Office and within our agency to identify and evaluate all possible options to implement PSP's new oilspill oversight responsibilities from the Legislature. A meeting with the Department of Ecology Oil Spill Program was held June 23rd at 8:30 am in Olympia. Additional meetings with stakeholders will be held over the next month leading to a recommendation on how to move forward being presented at the September Leadership Council meeting.

Developing a Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring Program

On May 28th, the Leadership Council authorized development of a coordinated ecosystem monitoring program within the Partnership, with the expectation that this governance arrangement be evaluated and revisited in one year. Next steps authorized by the Leadership Council include hiring one new Partnership staff person to shepherd program development and coordination; establishing a steering committee to provide strategic direction for program development and a technical committee to coordinate across a breadth of topics and implementers; and commissioning and coordinating technical work groups. EPA and the Partnership have allocated \$376K of federal (FFY 2008) funds for one year of support for the monitoring program coordinator and to support the program's committees and work groups.

Recruitment of a monitoring program coordinator will begin in July with the expectation that the position can be filled as early as late August 2009.

Staff have met with stakeholders (i.e., members of the PSAMP steering and management committees and those involved in the Puget Sound Monitoring Consortium) to obtain advice related to establishing the monitoring program's steering committee. Recruitment of steering committee members will begin in late July with the expectation that the steering committee can be convened in September 2009.

The Department of Ecology has committed funding for staffing and technical and facilitation services of the Stormwater Work Group. This work group is developing a coordinated monitoring strategy and implementation plan by June 2010 and its approach can serve as a model for the program evaluation and re-design efforts by other work groups. Later in 2009, the monitoring program coordinator and steering committee will commission additional work groups and establish a technical committee to coordinate their efforts.

2010 Legislative Priorities

There was general consensus that natural resource state agencies should work together to develop, strategize, prioritize and advance policy and budget requests with a nexus to Puget Sound in a way that is consistent with the priorities of the Action Agenda.

To this end the PSP is compiling the information and will propose some recommended options for members of the Puget Sound State Caucus to evaluate and develop a coordinated process for developing, prioritizing and advancing legislative and budget requests for 2010—a "Puget Sound legislative agenda." Information will be ready for discussion at the next Puget Sound State Caucus meeting.

Stimulus Funding for Salmon Recovery

NOAA funded \$16 million in Puget Sound habitat restoration projects proposed by the Partnership. Project sponsors applied independently to NOAA, for the \$170 million available nation-wide. All the money in Washington went to Puget Sound projects!

Low Impact Development (LID)

LID Local Code Assistance: Final recommendations on how to integrate low impact development (LID) into stormwater and land development regulations were delivered to the cities of Kent, Port Townsend and Sequim, and to Island County by June 30th. When adopted by the jurisdictions, these detailed recommendations, developed by AHBL, Inc. and funded by the Partnership, will remove local regulatory hurdles to the use of LID and, for many types of development, making LID the preferred way to develop land. A free CD of the recommendations is available from the Partnership, and summaries of the recommendations will soon be on the Partnership's web site. A total of 36 cities, towns and counties in the Puget Sound basin have now been helped under this project since 2005.

LID Professional Training: The LID Technical Class Series is now concluded, and the majority of attendees are seeking certification. The four-part class was funded by the Partnership and developed and conducted by WSU Extension Pierce County. The classes, covering all aspects of LID, were held in Port Townsend, Bellingham, Lacey and Seattle. Each class was two days in length, classes filled up fast, and waiting lists were established. Students of the class are now seeking certification by passing several tests and after attending all four of the classes (8 days in total of classroom instruction).

LID Technical Guidance: The LID Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound will be updated during the 2009-11 state biennium, and work has already begun to update it. The Partnership funded WSU Extension Pierce County to lead small work sessions related to bioretention modeling, pervious concrete, and porous asphalt. Information developed at the work sessions will be used in the updated LID Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound. The Partnership will again produce the manual and WSU Extension Pierce County will be prime author.

Increasing Use of Rain Gardens: The Partnership partnered with the King Conservation District and the Washington State Conservation Commission to reprint the popular Rain Garden Handbook for Western Washington. This guidance book is used as the prime resource for landowners and others interested in installing a rain garden on their properties.

Natural Resource Agency consolidation

A process has been launched by the Governor to identify opportunities to improve efficiencies among the state Nat'l Resource Agencies. The Natural Resource cabinet is meeting throughout the summer to develop recommendations by fall that will go to the Governor and ultimately may involve legislative action.

Misc

Science Policy Work Groups - Staff have finalized functions and members of these groups and will be announcing their formation shortly.